

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 L-03 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08  
INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 /049 W  
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
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AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION NATO  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2378

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB, SP  
SUBJ: STATUS OF THE BASQUE STV TRADE UNION

1. DURING THE COURSE OF CONVERSATIONS WITH LABATT ON MARCH 25 AND 26, STV (SOLIDARITY OF BASQUE WORKERS) VICE PRESIDENT JOSE LEUNDA - ACCOMPANIED BY STV INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY ALEX AGIRREZABAL - COMMENTED AS FOLLOWS ON THE PLANS OF HIS UNION.

2. THE STV HAD BEEN MEETING PERIODICALLY WITH SSO (SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION) SECGEN MELITINO GARCIA, MAINLY TO DISCUSS STV STATUTES AND MAKE SURE THEY WERE LEGALLY ACCEPTABLE. THE STV PLANNED TO REGISTER AS A TRADE UNION THE VERY DAY FOLLOWING LEGALIZATION (DEBATE ON THE TRADE UNION LEGALI-  
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ZATION BILL COMMENCES MARCH 30 IN THE CORTES), AND WANTED NO DELAYS. IN ANTICIPATION OF LEGALIZATION BY MAY 1 AT THE LATEST, THE STV PLANNED A WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN FOR MEMBERSHIP THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF MAY. THE UNION ALSO PLANNED TO EXPAND THEIR CURRENT 4 OFFICES TO 18: SEVEN EACH IN THE PROVINCES OF GUIPUZCOA AND VIZCAYA, AND TWO EACH IN ALAVA AND NAVARRA. THEY HOPED TO HAVE 30 FULLTIME

STAFFERS TO MAN THESE 18 OFFICES. IN ORDER TO GET STARTED FINANCIALLY, THE STV HAD APPROACHED A NUMBER OF BASQUE SAVINGS BANKS SEEKING LOANS. AS A RESULT, THEY HAD BEEN ABLE TO BORROW 20 MILLION PESETAS (APPROXIMATELY U.S. \$3000,000), WHICH 30 OF THEM HAD PERSONALLY UNDERWRITTEN.

3. LEUNDA SAID IT WAS THEIR HOPE THAT THE SSO WOULD MOVE QUICKLY IN EITHER GIVING THEM AN ADVANCE ON THE PARTIMONY DUE THEM FOR STV ASSETS CONFISCATED AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, OR ELSE PROVIDING A GUARANTEE UPON WHICH TO SECURE FURTHER LOANS. THEY WERE OPTIMISTIC, CONTINUED LEUNDA, FOR MELITINO GARCIA HAD EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT IT WAS THE STV THAT SHOULD SPEARHEAD THE FREE LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE BASQUE REGION, WHERE NEITHER THE SOCIALIST UGT NOR THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED SWC HAD ANY PARTICULAR POWER BASE. (IN THIS REGARD, WE WOULD COMMENT THAT BOTH THE UGT AND SWC REPORTEDLY HAVE A NOT INCONSEQUENTIAL FOLLOWING AMONG THE NON-BASQUE IMMIGRANT WORKERS IN THE BASQUE REGION.) THE SSO SECGEN HAD ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVT MIGHT BE PREPARED TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE STV SOME OF THE IN-PLACE MACHINERY OF THE SSO VERTICAL STRUCTURE IN THE BASQUE REGION. WITH THIS IN MIND, THE STV HAD ALREADY HIRED TWO YOUNG LABOR LAWYERS FROM THE SSO, AND WERE MAKING IT A POINT TO CONTACT OTHER YOUNG AND LIBERAL-INCLINED SSO LAWYERS. IN THAT CONNECTION, THE STV FELT THAT THE UGT WAS MAKING A BIG MISTAKE BY NOT TRYING TO ENTICE SSO BUREAUCRATS INTO JOINING THE UGT. THE STV BELIEVED THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF SSO EMPLOYEES, GIVEN A CHOICE, WOULD OPT TO ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES WITH A FREE TRADE UNION RATHER THAN A COMMUNIST-DOMINATED ONE. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. LEUNDA SAID THAT THEY WOULD BE MEETING WITH SYNDICAL RELATIONS MINISTER DE LA MATA NEXT WEEK, AND POSSIBLY ALSO WITH SUAREZ, TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE STV. UNLIKE MANY OF THE OTHER OPPOSITION UNIONS THAT HAD FLATLY REJECTED THE GOVT'S NEW LABOR DECREE, THE STV WAS TAKING THE POSITION THAT IT WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THEM AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD FUTURE EXPANDED LABOR REFORMS. FINALLY, SAID LEUNDA, THE STV DID NOT INTEND TO BECOME INVOLVED IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING, AND NO STV OFFICERS WOULD BE RUNNING FOR ELECTION. EATON

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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